



Forest Preserve District of Will County

# WOODS WALK

September 1 – November 30

***2023 Hiking Guide***

# Welcome to Woods Walk 2023

**1** Each hiker should have his or her own *Woods Walk 2023 Hiking Guide*. For additional booklets, call or pick them up at one of our visitor centers (see opposing page), where you can get additional information and perhaps purchase a walking stick. The Hiking Guide is also available online at *ReconnectWithNature.org*. Directions to the preserves are provided there as well.

**2** Hike seven of the 10 designated trails between September 1 and November 30 to receive a collector's medal. Look for the Woods Walk signs along all designated trails.

**3** Turn in your *2023 Hiking Guide* with the back inside page completed at one of our visitor centers, mail in the form on the back inside page or download the Goosechase iOS or Android app with your smartphone and sign up for a free account by December 31, 2023, to receive your medal.

This program is brought to the Forest Preserve through funding provided by



**Questions? Call 815-727-8700 or visit:**

**Sugar Creek Administration Center • 815-727-8700**  
17540 W. Laraway Road, Joliet  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

**Four Rivers Environmental Education Center • 815-722-9470**  
25055 W. Walnut Lane, Channahon  
Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. & Sunday noon-4 p.m.

**Hidden Oaks Nature Center • 815-722-4121**  
419 Trout Farm Road, Bolingbrook  
Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. & Sunday noon-4 p.m.

**Isle a la Cache Museum • 815-722-9301**  
501 E. 135th Street, Romeoville  
Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. & Sunday noon-4 p.m.

**Monee Reservoir • 708-534-8499**  
27341 Ridgeland Avenue, Monee Township  
Hours: Tuesday-Sunday March: 8 a.m.-4 p.m., April: 7 a.m.-6 p.m., May-August: 6 a.m.-7 p.m., September-October: 8 a.m.-4 p.m., November-February: Closed

**Plum Creek Nature Center • 708-946-2216**  
27064 Dutton Road, Beecher  
Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. & Sunday noon-4 p.m.

## Centennial Trail

### *Centennial Trail – Schneider's Passage*

#### Location

Centennial Trail – Schneider's Passage is located on Romeo Road, east of Isle a la Cache, in Romeoville.

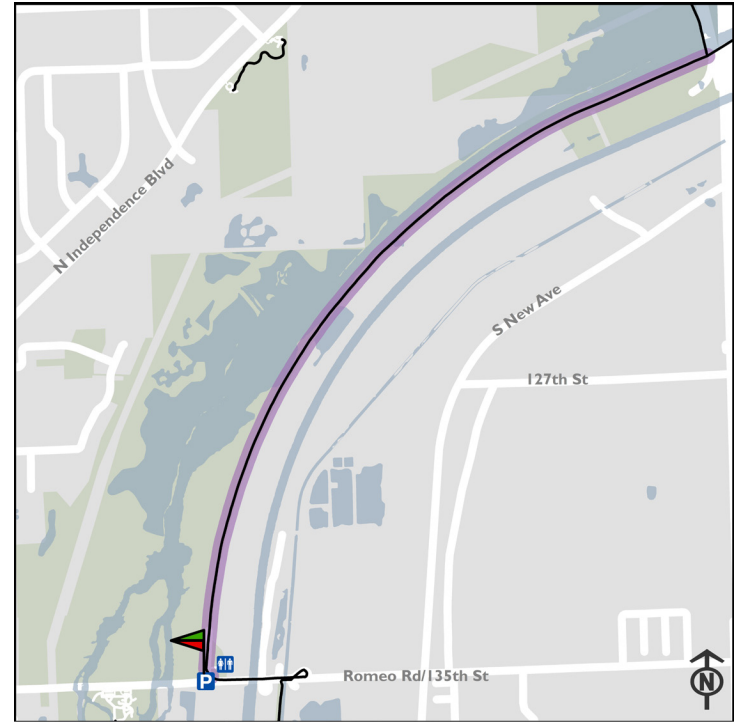
#### Notable Features

From Schneider's Passage, Centennial Trail is a flat trail that travels along the Des Plaines River through woodland and features a historic swing bridge.

The 386-acre Centennial Trail was acquired between 1993 and 2013.

Centennial Trail connects to a 3.17-mile crushed limestone segment of the I&M Canal Trail. This trail segment provides access to the Lockport Township Park District's Dellwood Park and Dellwood West. The I&M Canal Trail stretches farther south to the Forest Preserve's Joliet Iron Works Historic Site in Joliet.

At the Cook County line, the north end of the trail connects to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County's Centennial Trail.



## Centennial Trail

### *Centennial Trail – Schneider's Passage*

Surface Type: Asphalt

Woods Walk Route Round trip: 5.99 miles

## DuPage River Trail

### *Hammel Woods – Route 59 Access*

#### Location

Hammel Woods – Route 59 Access is located on Route 59, north of Route 52/Jefferson Street, in Shorewood.

#### Notable Features

The 445-acre Hammel Woods is part of the DuPage River preservation system, which conserves more than 1,500 acres.

The first 147 acres of Hammel Woods were the District's second and third acquisitions in 1930. The preserve is located at the site of the historic Grinton Mill and was named in honor of American soldiers who fought in the World War I battle in Hamel, France.

Hammel Woods offers two picnic shelters for rental, shoreline fishing and canoe/kayak launches on the DuPage River. No launch pass is required. The preserve includes access to a 3.77-mile, paved segment of the DuPage River Trail, ideal for biking, hiking/running, in-line skating, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.



## DuPage River Trail

### *Hammel Woods – Route 59 Access*

Surface Type: Asphalt  
Woods Walk Route Round trip: 3.41 miles

## Hickory Creek Bikeway

### *Hickory Creek Preserve – Hickory Creek Junction*

#### Location

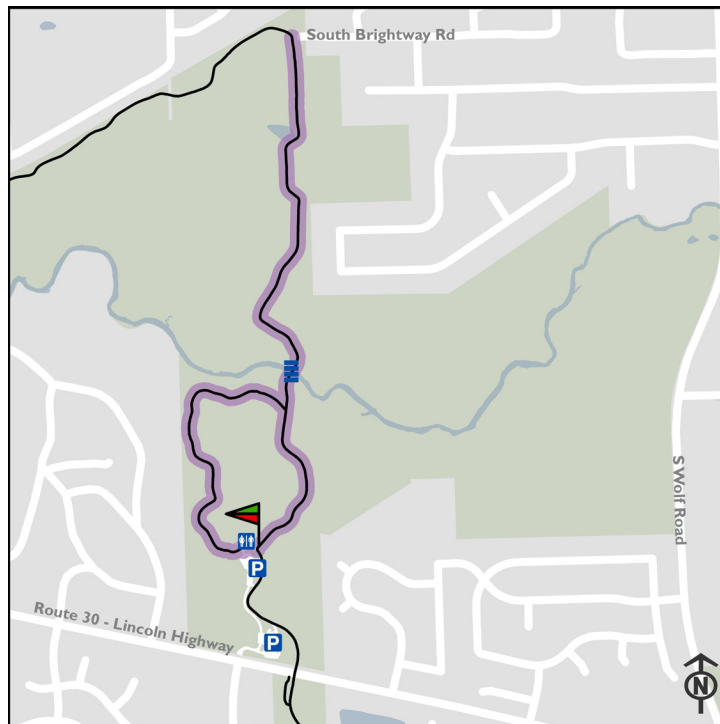
Hickory Creek Preserve – Hickory Creek Junction is located on Route 30/Lincoln Highway, west of Wolf Road, in Frankfort Township.

#### Notable Features

The 1,541-acre Hickory Creek Preserve is part of the Hickory Creek preservation system, which conserves more than 2,400 acres. The preserve is the District's largest individual land holding.

Wildlife found at the preserve includes more than 50 bird species, such as the pileated woodpecker, yellow-rumped warbler, brown creeper and hermit thrush.

The preserve is also home to a variety of plant species, including lead plant, beechwood sedge, yellow trout lily, prairie gentian and wild senna, as well as the largest population of the state-threatened savanna blazing star in Illinois and the federally-threatened Mead's milkweed.



## Hickory Creek Bikeway

### *Hickory Creek Preserve – Hickory Creek Junction*

Surface Type: Asphalt/Natural Surface  
Woods Walk Route Round trip: 2.39 miles

## Hidden Oaks Nature Trail/DuPage River Trail

### *Hidden Oaks Preserve*

#### Location

Hidden Oaks Preserve is located at 419 Trout Farm Road, north of Boughton Road, in Bolingbrook.

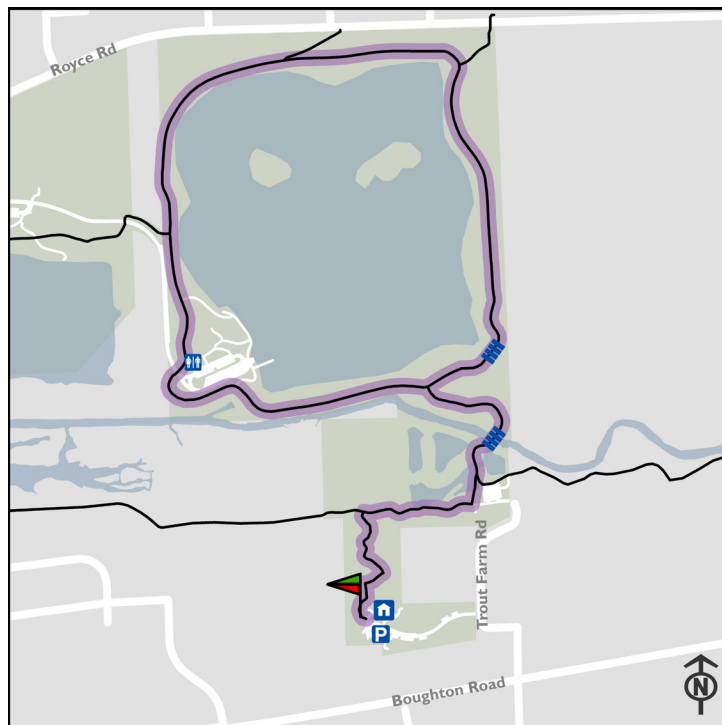
#### Notable Features

The preserve is part of the DuPage River preservation system, which conserves more than 1,500 acres.

Hidden Oaks protects a diversity of habitats, including prairie, forest and savanna.

Wildlife found at the preserve includes a multitude of songbirds, such as chickadees and brown creepers. Woodpeckers, including hairy woodpeckers and yellow-bellied sapsuckers, are also present. In addition, fox squirrels, gray squirrels, raccoons and opossums, as well as turkey, deer and garter snakes, call this preserve home.

The preserve is also home to a variety of plant species, from bergamot and goldenrod to spring ephemerals such as Dutchman's breeches, cut-leaved toothwort and Virginia bluebells. Trees include bur oaks, maples, black cherries and more.



## Hidden Oaks Nature Trail/DuPage River Trail

### *Hidden Oaks Preserve*

Surface Type: Natural Surface/Asphalt  
Woods Walk Route Round trip: 2.77 miles

## Monee Reservoir Nature Trail

### Monee Reservoir

#### Location

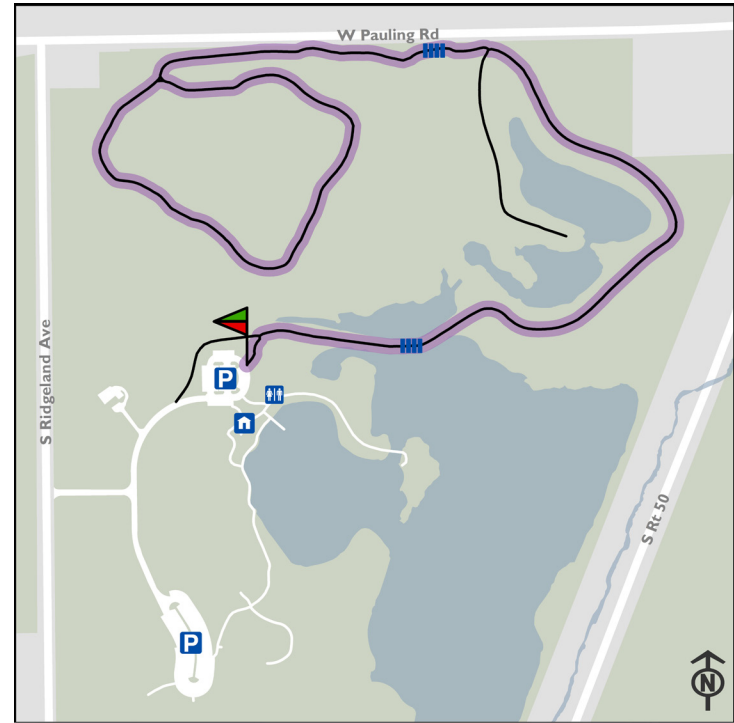
Monee Reservoir is located at 27341 Ridgeland Avenue, west of Route 50 and south of Pauling Road, in Monee Township.

#### Notable Features

Monee Reservoir is home to a variety of educational and recreational opportunities, including equipment rentals, fishing contests and other public programs, youth group programs, and more.

The preserve is part of the Rock Creek preservation system, which conserves more than 460 acres. Prior to the acquisition of the land, its 46-acre lake was created and used by a railroad to supply water to steam engines.

It is home to mink and beaver as well as 120 species of birds.



## Monee Reservoir Nature Trail

### *Monee Reservoir*

Surface Type: Natural Surface

Woods Walk Route Round trip: 2.23 miles

## Scout Trail/Oak Ridge Trail\*

### Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve

#### Location

Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve is located on Dutton Road, north of Goodenow Road, in Crete Township.

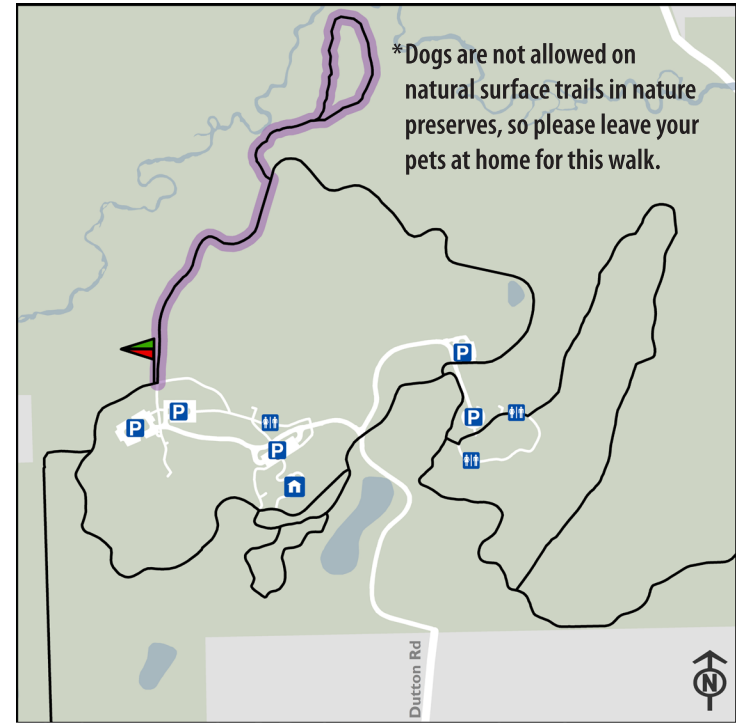
#### Notable Features

The 891-acre Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve is part of the Plum Creek preservation system, which conserves more than 2,300 acres. Prior to the District's acquisition of the land, the preserve was used as a Boy Scout camp. A 541-acre portion of the site was dedicated as an Illinois Nature Preserve in 1996.

The preserve is home to several state-threatened or endangered plant species, including the spotted coralroot orchid and earleaf false foxglove.

Goodenow Grove offers five trail options, including the 0.78-mile gravel-surface Scout Trail and the 3.15-mile limestone Plum Creek Greenway Trail.

The preserve features Plum Creek Nature Center, which offers nature education opportunities for families, school groups and youth groups and a natural outdoor playscape.



## Scout Trail/Oak Ridge Trail\*

### Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve

Surface Type: Gravel/Natural Surface  
Woods Walk Route Round trip: 1.04 miles



## Spring Creek Greenway Trail

### *Hadley Valley – Gougar Road Access*

#### Location

Hadley Valley – Gougar Road Access is located on Gougar Road, north of Route 6/Maple Road, in Joliet.

#### Notable Features

The 726-acre Hadley Valley is part of the Spring Creek preservation system, which conserves more than 1,900 acres.

Hadley Valley protects a diversity of habitats, including forest, savanna, wetland and a portion of Spring Creek.

The preserve is also the location of the largest restoration effort in the District's history – a stream de-channelization, wetland restoration and wildlife habitat restoration project in 500 acres of the preserve – performed in partnership with the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, Openlands, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the O'Hare Modernization Program.



## Spring Creek Greenway Trail

### *Hadley Valley – Gougar Road Access*

Surface Type: Limestone Screenings  
Woods Walk Route Round trip: 2.55 miles

## Spring Creek Greenway Trail

### *Messenger Marsh*

#### Location

Messenger Marsh is located on South Bell Road, south of Route 7/159th Street, in Homer Glen.

#### Notable Features

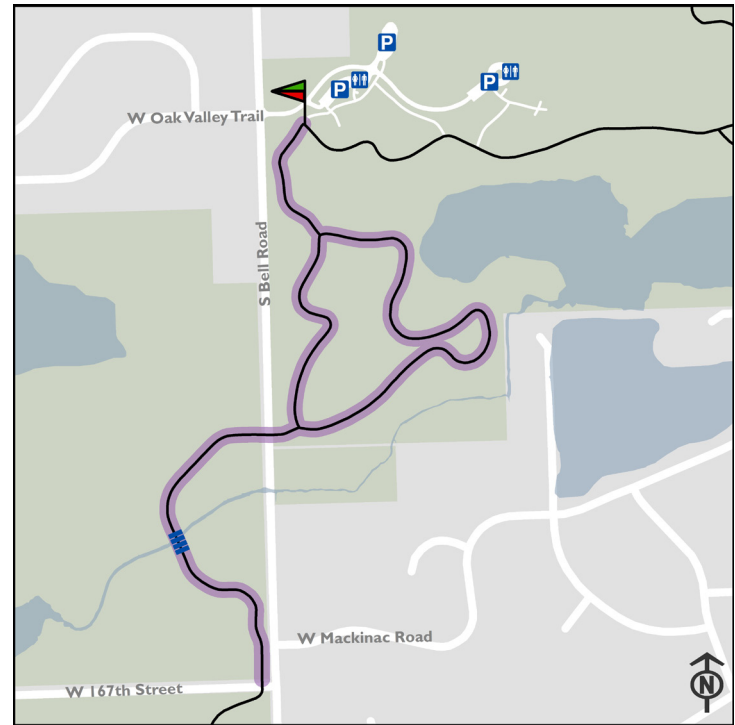
The 620-acre Messenger Marsh is part of the Spring Creek preservation system, which conserves more than 2,000 acres.

Messenger Marsh protects a diversity of habitats, including forest, savanna and a portion of Spring Creek.

Wildlife found at the preserve includes the wood frog, the brown snake and 110 bird species.

The preserve is also home to a variety of plant species, including hairy beardtongue, hispid sunflower, great white lettuce and sunshine rose.

The preserve features a 10.25-acre, off-leash dog park, including a 1.25-acre enclosure exclusively for dogs under 35 pounds. A permit is required for use of the dog park.



## Spring Creek Greenway Trail

### *Messenger Marsh*

Surface Type: Limestone Screenings  
Woods Walk Route Round trip: 1.9 miles

## Trail of the Old Oaks\*

### McKinley Woods – Frederick's Grove

#### Location

McKinley Woods – Frederick's Grove is located on McKinley Woods Road, south of Route 6/Eames Street, in Channahon.

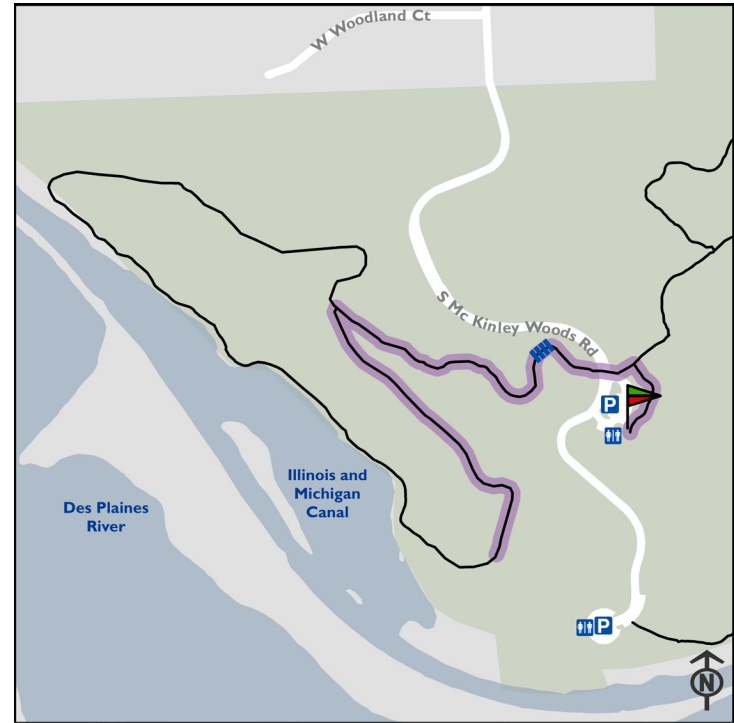
#### Notable Features

The 525-acre McKinley Woods was acquired between 1931 and 2004. The preserve is part of the Des Plaines River preservation system, which conserves more than 2,400 acres.

Prior to the District's acquisition of the land, it was used as a Civilian Conservation Corps camp, and the Frederick's Grove Shelter is a remnant of that camp.

McKinley Woods protects a diversity of habitats, including forest, prairie, wetland and a portion of the Des Plaines River. Wildlife found at the preserve includes the queen snake and 99 bird species, such as the cedar waxwing, bald eagle and purple martin.

Frederick's Grove features 1.32 miles of natural surface trails. It also provides access to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' 61.5-mile crushed limestone I&M Canal State Trail.



## Trail of the Old Oaks\*

### McKinley Woods – Frederick's Grove

Surface Type: Natural Surface

Woods Walk Route Round trip: 1.05 miles

*\*This route has been updated from the original printed booklet.*

## Wauponsee Glacial Trail

### *Forked Creek Preserve – Ballou Road Access*

#### Location

Forked Creek Preserve – Ballou Road Access is located on Ballou Road, east of Route 102, in Wilmington.

#### Notable Features

The 790-acre Forked Creek Preserve is part of the Forked Creek preservation system, which conserves more than 2,400 acres.

Wildlife found at the preserve includes a variety of bird species, such as the spotted sandpiper, yellow-billed cuckoo, dickcissel and ovenbird.

Ballou Road Access features a 9-acre dog park, campsites and access to the 22.29-mile Wauponsee Glacial Trail.



## Wauponsee Glacial Trail

### *Forked Creek Preserve – Ballou Road Access*

Surface Type: Limestone Screenings and Asphalt  
Woods Walk Route Round trip: 4.5 miles

# Golden Opportunity: Botanical Illustration



**October 15 – December 30**  
**10 a.m.-4 p.m., Tuesdays – Saturdays**  
**Noon-4 p.m., Sundays**

Discover the world of yellow plants and pigments through illustrations created by students at the Denver Botanic Gardens' School of Botanical Art & Illustration. This bilingual exhibition features illustrations created in colored pencil, watercolor, graphite, mixed media and ink. These highly-detailed drawings call attention to the variety of yellow plants that surround us and how they can be used to create dyes. Discover the magic of the science behind the color yellow and the long tradition of botanical illustration.

**Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon**  
**815-722-9470 • [ReconnectWithNature.org](https://ReconnectWithNature.org)**

## Interested in Volunteering?

What Type of  
Volunteer  
Are You?



### Public Offered Volunteer

- Shorter-term commitments
- Dates, times and locations of volunteer opportunities at [ReconnectWithNature.org](https://ReconnectWithNature.org)
- Limited options available
- Waiver good for calendar year



### Prairie People Volunteer

- Longer-term commitments
- Complete an application
- Background check
- Orientation and additional trainings



**For more information, visit [ReconnectWithNature.org](https://ReconnectWithNature.org)**



# SHOP OUR MERCH



Choose from  
nature-themed  
T-shirts, hats  
and more!



SHOP OUR ONLINE STORE

To receive your Woods Walk collector's medal, please download the Goosechase iOS or Android app with your smartphone and sign up for a free account or visit one of the Forest Preserve visitor centers (see Page 2) with this completed form in hand or fill out this form and mail it to:

Woods Walk  
c/o Sugar Creek Administration Center  
17540 W. Laraway Road  
Joliet, IL 60433

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check the trails you hiked:**

- ☐ Centennial Trail
- ☐ DuPage River Trail – Hammel Woods
- ☐ Hickory Creek Bikeway
- ☐ Hidden Oaks Nature Trail/DuPage River Trail
- ☐ Monee Reservoir Nature Trail
- ☐ Scout Trail/Oak Ridge Trail
- ☐ Spring Creek Greenway Trail – Hadley Valley
- ☐ Spring Creek Greenway Trail – Messenger Marsh
- ☐ Trail of the Old Oaks
- ☐ Wauponsee Glacial Trail

Did you know that you can also participate in the Woods Walk Challenge using the Goosechase app? Just download the Goosechase iOS or Android app with your smartphone and sign up for a free account. Then, starting September 1, search for *Will County Woods Walk Challenge* to get started!

## Preserve hours 8 a.m. to sunset

ReconnectWithNature.org



In providing programs and services to the public, the Forest Preserve District will make reasonable modifications to ensure that all people have an equal opportunity to enjoy District offerings. For more information, visit *ReconnectWithNature.org/ADA*.

**FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT**  
**WILL COUNTY**

Bringing People and Nature Together

